

before they flew away, there was no doubt in our minds that they were indeed whitewinged black terns *Chlidonias leucopterus* in full breeding plumage.

The next day, on April 10, only one individual was present and we were able to shoot a picture of this bird despite the great distance.

So far there have been only three records of the bird from the western side of India, on the basis of which this tern is considered to be rare

in this part of the country (Ali and Ripley, 1981, HANDBOOK OF THE BIRDS OF INDIA AND PAKISTAN Vol. III). This is the first record of the species in Rajasthan.

September 17, 1996 HARKIRAT S. SANGHA
HARSH VARDHAN
B-27, Gautam Marg,
Hanuman Nagar,
Jaipur-302 021.

9. AERIAL DISPLAY OF RUFIOUS TURTLE DOVE *STREPTOPELIA ORIENTALIS* *AGRICOLA* TICKELL NEAR NAMBOL BAZAR, MANIPUR

On 20th May, 1996 at about 0530 hrs, I saw a pair of rufous turtle doves, *Streptopelia orientalis agricola* on a dry twig of a big tree enjoying the morning sun. Suddenly, one of them (probably a male) left the perch for an aerial show covering about one minute in three successive phases (or models). The first-phase flight was short, horizontal with gentle wing flapping and unsplayed tail. This was followed by a swift and forceful steep flight with rapid wing clapping, producing loud sounds, but tail slightly fanned out. In the third or final phase, it flew in gliding and coasting in a semicircle with both wing and

tail fully fanned out. Only during this phase of flight could the white of the terminal fringe of tail be seen. On completing such a round flight, it alighted about two feet away from the other bird at first, but on the same branch, then gradually moved in mincing paces. No display call or aggressive attitude was exhibited by either bird. However, this activity may be a courtship display.

July 10, 1996 Kh. SHAMUNGOU SINGH
Department of Zoology,
D.M. College of Sciences
Imphal-795 001; Manipur.

10. AN INDIAN PITTA (*PITTA BRACHYURA*) TRAPPED IN A STANDARD SHERMAN LIVE TRAP

I studied the effect of rainforest fragmentation on small mammals by the removal method which consisted of 50 foldable Sherman live traps along five 5 x 10 m grids in a disturbed forest patch of the Indira Gandhi Wildlife Sanctuary, Tamil Nadu. The traps were baited with peanut butter and were designed for large bodied rats like the house rat (*Rattus rattus*), but are sensitive even for animals weighing as little as 8g. In the morning of 28th March 1995, while I approached a particular trap station, the box was shaking. The trapped creature made a few harsh sounds which confused me. To my surprise, there was

an Indian pitta (*Pitta brachyura*) inside. After identifying the bird it was released at the same spot. I thought this record of particular interest because a) the bird stands higher than the mouth of the trap and b) the bird had either come for the bait of peanut butter or to feed on the insects or ants which had been lured into the trap by the bait. The Indian pitta primarily feeds and forages on insects, grubs and worms on the ground (Ali & Ripley, 1987 COMPACT HANDBOOK OF BIRDS OF INDIA AND PAKISTAN). Hence, it likely that the bird was attracted to the insects or bugs rather than to the peanut butter, although this needs to be